

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Currently amended) A device for the ~~characterisation~~ characterization of microorganisms comprising a porous body having regions of differing pore size, said regions being associated with different chromogens specific to enzymes produced by microorganisms.
2. (Currently amended) ~~A device as claimed in~~ The device of claim 1 wherein the porous body comprises membranes impregnated with chromogens.
3. (Currently amended) The device of claim 1 ~~A device as claimed in claims 1 and 2~~ in which the porous body comprises a plurality of membranes having differing pore sizes.
4. (Currently amended) The device of claim 3 ~~A device as claimed in claims 1 to 3~~ wherein the pore sizes vary from 0.6µm to 3.5µm.
5. (Currently amended) The device of claim 2 ~~A device as claimed in claims 1 to 4~~ wherein the membranes are cellulose membranes.
6. (Currently amended) The device of claim 2 ~~A device as claimed in claims 1 to 5~~ in which the chromogens are specific to different enzymes.

7. (Currently amended) The device of claim 2A device as claimed in claims 1 to 6 in which the chromogens impart a characteristic ~~colour~~ color to different bacterial colonies.
8. (Currently amended) The device of claim 2A device as claimed in claims 1 to 7 wherein the chromogens comprise a chromogenic substrate that is chosen from Indoxyl butyrate, Indoxyl glucoside, Esculin, Magenta glucoside, Red- β -glucuronide, 2-methoxy-4-(2-nitrovinyl) phenyl β -D-glucopyranoside (MNP-glc), 2-methoxy-4-(2-nitrovinyl) phenyl β -D-2-acetamido-2-deoxyglucopyranoside (MNP-glcNAc), 5-Bromo-4-Chloro-3-Indoxyl-beta-D-Glucuronide, Cyclohexylammonium Salt (X-Glc), or 5-Bromo-4-Chloro-3-indoyl-beta-D-Galactopyranoside (X-gal).
9. (Currently amended) The device of claim 1A device as claimed in claims 1 to 8 wherein the porous body further comprises a phosphate buffer.
10. (Currently amended) The device of claim 1A device as claimed in claims 1 to 9 wherein the porous body further comprises IPTG.
11. (Currently amended) The device of claim 1A device as claimed in claims 1 to 10 wherein the porous body further comprises Mg^{2+} ions.
12. (Currently amended) The device of claim 2A device as claimed in claims 1 to 11 wherein the membranes are presented in a layered arrangement, ~~the~~ with an uppermost

layer comprising a sample application pad of a 903 membrane impregnated with a phosphate buffer, subsequent regions are in the form of layers having pore sizes of 3.0 μ m, 1.2 μ m, 0.8 μ m and 0.6 μ m, respectively.

13 (Currently amended) The device of claim 2~~A device as claimed in claims 1 to 11~~ wherein the membranes are presented in a row and column arrangements, each row comprising a particular substrate and each column comprising a different filter.

14. (Currently amended) A method for ~~characterising~~ characterizing bacteria using a device comprising a porous body having regions of differing pore size, said regions being associated with different chromogens specific to enzymes produced by microorganisms, wherein the method comprises ~~as claimed in any of claims 1 to 13 comprising~~ the steps of:

- a) applying a solution containing bacteria to the porous body in ~~an area~~ the region having ~~the a~~ a largest pore size,
- b) allowing the solution to wick through the porous body,
- c) leaving the device to develop in an incubator set ~~to~~ to about 37°C, and assessing the ~~colours~~ colors developed on the device in order to ascertain the bacteria present.

15. (New) The method of claim 14, wherein the porous body comprises membranes impregnated with chromogens.

16. (New) The method of claim 14, wherein the porous body comprises a plurality of membranes having differing pore sizes.
17. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the pore sizes vary from 0.6 μ m to 3.5 μ m.
18. (New) The method of claim 15, wherein the membranes are cellulose membranes.
19. (New) The method of claim 15, wherein the chromogens are specific to different enzymes.
20. (New) The method of claim 15, wherein the chromogens impart a characteristic color to different bacterial colonies.